

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO CINCPAC

USSAAG

S E C R E T STATE 129069

EXDIS

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE SECDEF FROM PHNOM PENH JUN 30

QUOTE

S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 6543

EXDIS

DEPT PASS BANGKOK, SAIGON, CINCPAC, USSAAG

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,PINT, MOPS, CB, US, EA

SUBJECT: ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE FANK MILITARY POSTURE

1. ALTHOUGH IT WOULD NOW APPEAR THAT US COMBAT AIR OPERATIONS MAY CONTINUE FOR A TIME IN CAMBODIA, WE HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF THE CONCERN THE POTENTIAL WITHDRAWAL OF OUR COMBAT AIR POWER HAS GENERATED AMONG THE KHMER TO DRIVE HOME TO THEM THE URGENCY OF ACCELERATED EFFORTS ON THEIR PART TO IMPROVE THE FANK MILITARY POSTURE.

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2. ACTIONS TAKEN HAVE INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

(A) MAJOR GEN THONGVAN FANMUONG, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF OF FANK, ACCOMPANIED BY CHMEDTC, VISITED COMUSSAAG ON JUNE 27 FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING ACTIONS WHICH THE GKR SHOULD TAKE PREPARATORY TO AND FOLLOWING A WITHDRAWAL OF OUR AIR COMBAT SUPPORT. AMONG THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF GENERAL VOGT WERE NEW EFFORTS TO IMPROVE KHMER AIR FORCE CAPABILITIES, CONTINUING EFFORTS TO KEEP HIGHWAYS 4 AND 5 AND THE MEKONG OPEN FOR SUPPLY, IMPROVED USE AND DEPLOYMENT OF ARTILLERY, AND A NEW MILITARY EFFORT TO REOPEN ROUTE 1 (THE WEST BANK OF THE MEKONG) BETWEEN PHNOM PENH AND NEAK LUONG. GENERAL VOGT ALSO STRESSED THE NECESSITY OF A MAXIMUM EFFORT BY FANK UNITS TO EXPLOIT THE ADVANTAGES OF OUR AIR SUPPORT WHILE IT IS STILL AVAILABLE. ON HIS RETURN TO PHNOM PENH, MAJ GEN THONGVAN FANMUONG REPORTED DIRECTLY AND, WE HAVE LEARNED, ACCURATELY TO MARSHAL LON NOL, AND SUBSEQUENTLY TO THE GOVERNMENT, ON THESE RECOMMENDATIONS; AND AS A RESULT NEW COMMAND ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN WORKED OUT WHICH WILL HAVE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF FANK MAJ GEN SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ OVERSEEING OPERATIONS ON HIGHWAY 4, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF THONGVAN FANMUONG OVERSEEING OPERATIONS ON HIGHWAY 5, MAJ GEN HOU HANGSIN OVERSEEING OPERATIONS ON HIGHWAY 2 AND 3, AND BGEN DENG LAYOM IN CHARGE OF ROUTE 6. THE IMPORTANT MEKONG LOC WILL HAVE THE ATTENTION OF COMMODORE VONG SARENDY, BGEN DIEN DEL, AND COL NEP PARAMOUN.

(B) WE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE VISIT TO PHNOM PENH JUNE 29 OF LTGEN DEANE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DIA, TO MAKE THESE SAME POINTS TO MAJ GEN SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ DURING HIS CALL ON THE LATTER.

(C) THE DCM, CHMEDTC, AND THE ECONOMIC COUNSELOR MET JUNE 29 WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE U SAY, MINISTER OF FINANCE KEO MONGKRY, AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ TO DISCUSS A SERIES OF PROPOSALS TO PROMOTE RECRUITMENT. AT THIS MEETING, WHICH RESULTED FROM A PROPOSAL I HAD MADE TO PRIME MINISTER IN TAM, IT WAS
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AGREED THAT THE MINISTERS CONCERNED WOULD BEGIN WORK JUNE 30 ON A THREE-POINT PROGRAM CONSISTING OF THE FOLLOWING PARTS:

(1) PAYMENT OF QTE PRIME D'INTERVENTION UNQTE OF 1500 RIELS A MAN A MONTH TO THE MOBILE RESERVE, MANEUVER FORCES ATTACHED TO THE MR'S, AND COMBAT ELEMENTS OF THE NAVY AND AIR FORCE. IT WOULD BE EXPECTED THAT 80,000

MEN WOULD RECEIVE THE PREMIUM, EQUIVALENT TO AT LEAST A ONE-FIFTH INCREASE IN EARNINGS, AT A TOTAL COST OF 1.5 BILLION RIELS A YEAR.

(2) A RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN (SPEECHES, RADIO, PRESENTATION RALLIES, POSTERS) TO BE LED BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE GOVERNMENT. TO UNDERPIN THE CAMPAIGN AND ANSWER PUBLIC DEMANDS FOR PURIFICATION OF FANK, THE DEFENSE MINISTER WOULD ACT RAPIDLY AND HOPEFULLY SPECTACULARLY ON FOUR OR FIVE MILITARY CORRUPTION CASES NOW READY FOR THE COURTS. WE WOULD SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN IF POSSIBLE THROUGH THE USE OF BIG SHOW ASSETS.

(3) THE GKR IS TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP A DETAILED OBLIGATORY SERVICE LAW FOR POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION IN LATE JULY WHEN PUBLIC REACTION TO JUNE PRICE INCREASE FOR RICE,PETROLEUM, ELECTRICITY AND WATER HAVE BEEN ASSESSED. THE LAW WOULD GO LIGHT ON STUDENTS (MULTIPLE EXEMPTIONS UP TO 29 YEARS OLD), BUT BEAR ON CIVILIAN OFFICE HOLDERS AND PEASANTS.

(D) WE ARE ALSO TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTIONS TO AUGMENT AND IMPROVE FANK EQUIPMENT AND MUNITIONS STATUS, AS YOU MAY HAVE NOTED FROM OTHER TRAFFIC.

3. GIVEN OUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THE GKR AND THE FANK, WE RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS NO ASSURANCE THAT THE KHMER WILL FOLLOW THROUGH ON THESE SUGGESTIONS, BUT THE THREAT OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF OUR COMBAT AIR SUPPORT HAS HAD A SALUTARY PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT ON THE LEADERSHIP IN BRINGING HOME TO IT AS NEVER BEFORE THE NEED FOR A MAXIMUM DEFENSE EFFORT. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH IN THIS DIRECTION, STRESSING THAT ONLY THROUGH AN

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IMPROVED DEFENSE POSTURE CAN BE GKR HOPE TO SURVIVE AND TO ENTER FROM A POSITION OF MODERATE STRENGTH WHATEVER NEGOTIATIONS MAY PROVE TO BE POSSIBLE.
SWANK
UNQUOTE ROGERS

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